

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 2, 7-21, 23-25, 27, and 32-126 are cancelled. Claims 1, 3-6, 22, 26, and 28-31 remain in this application and are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Claims 3 and 28 have been amended solely to have the claims conform to the requirements of U.S. practice. None of these amendments is intended to narrow the scope of any of these claims, and no new matter has been added by these amendments.

In the Office Action, claims 1-4, 22-23, and 26-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bunn (U.S. Patent No. 6,240,365) in view of Rothert (U.S. Patent No. 7,141,610), Murakami (U.S. Patent No. 7,181,409), and Dickerson (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0037174), and claims 5-6 and 30-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bunn in view of Rothert, Murakami, and Dickerson and further in view of the article titled "Rental Car Revelations" (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, May 14, 2000, pg. 2). Claims 2 and 27 are cancelled. Applicants submit that the claims are patentably distinguishable over the relied on sections of the references.

Independent claims 1, 22 and 26 have each been amended to more clearly show the differences between the claimed features and the relied on art. No new matter has been added by these changes. Support for these changes is found at, e.g., Figs. 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, and 12 and pages 15-17, 19, 28-29, 35-36, 61-62, and 67 of the specification.

As amended herein, claim 1 recites:

virtual currency acceptance means for accepting virtual currency provided by a user of that movable body apparatus, the virtual currency storing account information that includes balance information in virtual currency units used solely for the movable

body rental system, the virtual currency units being convertible into units of circulated currency at a conversion rate that varies based on demand for renting the movable body apparatuses[.]

(Emphasis added.) Neither the relied on sections of Bunn, the relied on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson disclose or suggest accepting... virtual currency storing account information that includes balance information in virtual currency units used solely for a movable body rental system. Moreover, neither the relied on sections of Bunn, the relied on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson disclose or suggest accepting... virtual currency storing account information that includes balance information in virtual currency units... convertible into units of circulated currency at a conversion rate that varies based on demand for renting movable body apparatuses.

Amended claim 1 also calls for:

determination means for determining whether payment is possible based on the account information of the virtual currency[.]

(Emphasis added.) Neither the relied on sections of Bunn, the relied on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson disclose or suggest determining whether payment is possible based on account information (that includes balance information in virtual currency units used solely for a movable body rental system) of virtual currency. Moreover, neither the relied on sections of Bunn, the relied on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson disclose or suggest determining whether payment is possible based on account information (that includes balance information in virtual currency units... convertible into units of circulated currency at

a conversion rate that varies based on demand for renting movable body apparatuses) of virtual currency.

Additionally, amended claim 1 calls for:

said virtual currency acceptance means of said movable body apparatus updating the balance information of the virtual currency in accordance with the balance update information.

(Emphasis added.) Neither the relied on sections of Bunn, the relied on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson disclose or suggest updating balance information (in virtual currency units used solely for a movable body rental system) of virtual currency in accordance with balance update information. Further, neither the relied on sections of Bunn, the relied on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson disclose or suggest updating balance information (in virtual currency units convertible into units of circulated currency at a conversion rate that varies based on demand for renting movable body apparatuses) of virtual currency in accordance with balance update information.

It follows, for at least the above reasons, that neither the relied-on sections of Bunn, the relied-on sections of Rothert, the relied-on sections of Murakami, nor the relied-on sections of Dickerson, whether taken alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the movable body rental system defined in claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentably distinct and unobvious over the cited references.

Independent claims 22 and 26 each call for features similar to those set out in the above excerpt of claim 1. Therefore, each of claims 22 and 26 is patentably distinct and unobvious over the relied-on sections of Bunn, Rothert, Murakami, and Dickerson for at least the same reasons.

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1, claim 23 depends from claim 22, and claims 27-31 depend from claim 26. Therefore,

each of these claims is distinguishable over the relied-on sections of the art for at least the same reasons.

Further regarding claims 5-6 and 30-31, the relied-on sections of "Rental Car Revelations" do not overcome the deficiencies of the relied-on sections of Bunn, Rothert, Murakami, and Dickerson.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 103(a).

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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